

Document No. 6

No Change in Class. ☐

Class. Changed to: TS S C

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By: 009256

NSC BRIEFING

THAILAND

- I. There are increasing indications that Sarit's control over the ruling military group is weakening to the point where some of his disgruntled military supporters might be tempted to try a coup.
- A. Ever since the ailing Sarit's hasty return from England and abrogation of the constitution last month, he has insisted on holding all the reins of government, [REDACTED]
- B. He has also antagonized some key military leaders by not consulting them on matters affecting their personal interests.
- C. Although Sarit may soon install a provisional cabinet with himself as premier, this in itself will probably do little to halt the current drift.
- II. A big factor is Sarit's precarious health, which militates against the firm leadership necessary to keep ambitious underlings under control.
- III. Should Sarit fall from power, ^{at present it appears that} his most likely successor would be General Prapat, the former interior minister.

~~SECRET~~

- A. Prapat, [REDACTED] is strongly opposed in the military group by the relatively moderate, reformist elements best epitomized by former Premier Thanom.
- B. Both the Prapat and the Thanom factions have been critical of Sarit's recent performance.

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